

IV. Remarks

Claims 1-15 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 5-15 stand rejected for anticipation, while claims 2-4 stand objected-to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim (claim 1) but are indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this paper, Applicants have cancelled claims 1, 11, 14, and 15. Claim 2 has been amended into independent form, and includes all limitations of prior base claim 1. Claims 5, 6, and 12 (as well as claim 13 through claim 12) have also been amended to now depend directly from claim 2. Finally, claim 7 has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that which Applicants regard as their invention, 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, specifically that the recited forming means is an inflatable forming means that extends axially within an interior portion of the elongated tubular braid structure. Support for the amendments to claim 7 is found, for example, at specification page 8, lines 1-9. No new matter has been added by these amendments. Consideration of amended claim 2, and reconsideration of claims 5-10; 12, and 13 and the withdrawal of the outstanding rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), are respectfully requested.

At paragraph 8 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner has suggested that Figure 1a should be labeled "prior art." Applicant agrees; however, Applicant notes that Figure 1a inadvertently contained both a perspective view of the prior art suspension and Applicant's composite leaf spring. Figure 1a has been suitably amended to obviate both of these issues.

At paragraph 10 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner requests that Applicant inform the USPTO if other search reports on foreign counterpart applications have been rendered whether published or not. As stated in the accompanying Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, Applicant has not received a foreign search report in any foreign counterpart application other than the British Search Report found in GB 2375502 published November 20, 2002, as identified by the Examiner.

At paragraph 12 of the Detailed Action, the Examiner requires a supplemental oath or declaration, and the identification of the parent application. Applicant is not claiming benefit of U.S. provisional application no. 60/215,422 filed June 30, 2000, or of U.S. patent application no. 09/870,251 filed May 5, 2001 (the applications erroneously identified in the "Cross-Reference to Related Applications" of the original specification as filed). Accordingly, Applicant has amended the "Cross-Reference to Related Applications" to properly recite the applications to which Applicant intends to claim benefit or priority. Applicant submits that the Examiner's requirement for a supplemental oath or declaration has been obviated by this amendment to the specification.

Turning to the rejections set forth in the Detailed Action, claims 5, 6, 12, and 13 stand rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,659,071 ("Woltron"), while claims 12 and 13 also stand rejected as being anticipated by JP 570116610 ("Ebata"). Each of these claims has been amended to now depend either directly or indirectly from claim 2, a claim which the Examiner has indicated as being allowable over the art of record in this application. Applicant submits that claims 5, 6, 12, and 13 are patentable over the art of record in this application.

Finally, claims 7-10 stand rejected as being anticipated by Woltron. As noted above, independent system claim 7 has been amended to specifically identify the "forming means" as being "inflatable" and, further, that the inflatable forming means is disposed within the tubular braid structure; as well as an additional means for inflating the forming means to press the resinated braid structure against the mold cavity. Woltron teaches a "take-up unit 27" about which continuous fibres are wound (see, e.g., Woltron at col 4, ll. 24-32). Woltron's take-up unit is neither inflatable nor "extends axially within" the interior of the recited elongated tubular braid structure. Woltron neither teaches nor suggests the system claimed by Applicant in claim 7 and its dependent claims 8-10.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2-10, 12, and 13 patentably define over the references of record in this application. The allowance of claims 2-10, 12, and 13 is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date



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Attachment: One replacement sheet of drawings